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Health Department News

ADDRESSING THE NEEDS OF FOOD SERVICE
ESTABLISHMENTS WITH IN TIPPECANOE COUNTY

A Word about Certified Food Handlers

Do you have a certified food handler?

What will you do if the certified food handler leaves your establishment?

How much are they working in your establishment?

Get the answers to these and other commonly asked questions in this article. Don't get caught without a knowledgeable certified food handler.

Q: Does the Certified Food Handler need to be a manager or owner of the establishment?

A: The Rule states that the definition of a certified food handler is: an owner, an operator, a manager, or an employee of a food establishment". But it further states: "and is responsible for or oversees the storage, preparation, display, or serving of food to the public". Therefore, the certified food handler must meet both criteria and must have some oversight capacity.

Q: Does there have to be a certified food handler present at the establishment at all times?

A: No. There must be one certified food handler employed at each establishment.

Q: How long does a food establishment have to comply with the Rule having just opened or changed ownership?

A: Six months for either circumstance.

Q: Does the certification need to be posted in a conspicuous place?

A: No, but the certification does need to be available to the regulatory agency upon request.

Q: If the establishment paid for the employee to take the certification test does the employee get to take the certification with them when they leave?

A: The certification is for an individual, not an establishment. If the certified food handler leaves the establishment then the establishment must have a new certified food handler within 3 months.

Q: How long does a food establishment have to comply with the Rule after their certified food handler has left their employment?

A: The establishment has three months to come into compliance with the Rule. Consideration should be given to employing a second certified food handler to avoid this problem.

Q: Does the original certification need to be on site or can a copy be on site?

A: The original is preferred but not required.

Q: I have heard that some establishments are exempt from this rule, is this true?

A: Yes, if you only sell prepackaged food items that you never open or if you only prepare a limited menu of non potentially hazardous food items you are exempt from this rule. If you have questions about exemptions please contact the local health department with your questions and a complete list of exemptions.

If you have any additional questions about certification please contact the Health Department.



Check out the self inspection checklist and other valuable information on our web site:
www.tippecanoe.in.gov/health/

Do You Know THE FIVE REPORTABLE DISEASES

Many of you have been asked by your health department inspectors your policy regarding ill employees. You have been asked what symptoms you look for and what you do when you notice symptoms of illness. For example, you know to exclude employees who have the symptoms of vomiting, diarrhea, and fever from the establishment and you know to restrict employees who have cuts or lesions from working in the food preparation area.

It is now time to expand your knowledge of what causes food borne illness. All of the symptoms listed above can be linked to 5 reportable food borne illness. It is required that you report to the health department if you or any of your employees have been diagnosed by a health care professional with any of the following:

- Shigella
- Salmonella
- Hepatitis A
- E- Coli
- Norovirus

If you have confirmation of any of the above illness immediately exclude the person from the establishment and contact your local health department. At that time the health department will give you the necessary information to help prevent a food borne illness outbreak in your food service establishment.

BEWARE: Don't Believe False Claims

Over the summer the Indiana State Department of Health put out an advisory warning food establishments of a company's claims of fines and jail time if hand washing signage is not located at hand washing sinks. The company claimed to be the "Indiana Food Compliance Center" out of Speedway Indiana.

The company is claiming that hand washing signs are required at all hand sinks. **This simply is not true.** The Indiana State Food Code 7-24 does not require hand washing signs at hand sinks.

Please contact your local health department if you receive threatening letters of this nature. If you ever have questions about Indiana Food Codes please contact the Health Department.

APPLICATIONS FOR FOOD SERVICE

You will soon be receiving a renewal application for food service for the upcoming year. **It is vital that you fill this form out completely** and that each blank space is completed.

Even if you have had an establishment in this county for several years we need the application to be completed in full in order to update our system. Failure to complete the application may delay your food service permit and possible late fees.

Be sure to pay your permits in a timely fashion or you will be subject to late fees or possible suspension of your permit.



Tips and Pointers

Beverage Tubing – You may not use the same ice to cool your beverage tubing as you use for human consumption in drinks. New construction should meet the requirements but most establishments that had ice bins and beverage tubing installed prior to 2005 may not meet the requirements. If your beverage tubing is cooled by the same ice as you use for drinks you should contact your distributor for options. You may also place a divider between the ice for cooling and the ice for consumption in order to prevent any cross contamination.

Date Marking Changes – The ISDH has made some changes to the date marking regulation. Commercially made salads such as chicken salad and tuna salad no longer need to be date marked. This does not include salads that you prepare in your establishment or salads that you alter in any way.

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